The Floral Gift

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CONSIDER
THE LILLIES OF
THE FIELD

The Book Gift

An Illuminated Souvenir

by

Samuel Stanesby

London

Griffith & Farran, corner of St Paul's Churchyard.


Illuminated by Sam! Staneslip.
Painted in Colors by Thomas Bessett.
A
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The Floral Gift:

Flowers.

OH, lovely flow'rs, my ever faithful friends!
Ye are the ſweeteſt poetry of earth,
Ye are the dim foreſhadowings of heav'n,
Bright angels ſhower'd from the realms above,
To give us a faint picture of their home,
A gleam of its ne'er-fading lovelineſs.
Ye kiſs our footſteps whereſoe'er we roam;
Ever with ſweeteſt ſmiles ye welcome us;
We inadvertently may tread on you,
And yet you gently raiſe your trembling heads,
And with the ſame ſweet ſmile look on our face,
And breathe a richer perfume in return!
Oh, what deep leſſons may we learn from you,
Ye open books, bright with the light of God!

P. V. GORDON DE MONTGOMERY.

Woman's Love; Violets.

A WOMAN'S love, deep in the heart,
Is like the violet flower,
That lifts its modeſt head apart
In ſome ſequeſter'd bower.

And bleſt is he who finds that bloom,
Who ſips its gentle ſweets;
He heeds not life's oppreſſive gloom,
Nor all the care he meets.

A woman's love is like the rock
That every tempeſt braves,
And ſtands ſecure amidſt the ſhock
Of ocean's wildeſt waves;

And bleſt is he to whom repoſe
Within its ſhade is given;
The world, with all its cares and woes,
Seems leſs like earth than heaven.

ANON.

THE violet is for faithfulneſs.

SHAKESPEARE.

The Primrose.

WELCOME, pale primroſe, ſtarting up between
Dead matted leaves of aſh and oak, that ſtrew
The very lawn, the wood and ſpinney through,
'Mid creeping moſs and ivy's darker green;
How much thy preſence beautifies the ground!
How ſweet thy modeſt unaffected pride
Glows on the ſunny bank and wood's warm ſide.
And when thy fairy flowers in groups are found,
The ſchoolboy roves enchantingly along,
Plucking the faireſt with a rude delight;
While the meek ſhepherd ſtops his ſimple ſong,
To gaze a moment on the ſimple ſight,
O'erjoyed to ſee the flowers that truly bring
The welcome news of ſweet returning ſpring!

CLARE.

THE flowers are Nature's jewels, with whoſe wealth
She decks her ſummer beauty; primroſe ſweet,
With bloſſoms of pure gold; enchanting roſe,
That like a virgin queen ſalutes the ſun,
Dew-diadem'd.

GEO. CROLY.

The Rose.

THE roſe is red, the roſe is white,
The roſe it blooms in ſummer light;
But ah! it clouds the heart's delight
To muſe upon its hiſtory;
It tells full many a woeful tale
Of hearts made cold, of cheeks made pale,
Of love's ſad ſigh, the widow's wail,
In days of ſtrife and chivalry;
Sweet freedom, may the age prevail,
That ſtrife no more may be.

The roſe is red, the roſe is white,
The roſe is pleaſant to the ſight;
Now both its hues in one unite,
To crown the brows of royalty.
Strife took the white roſe for its creſt,
But Concord placed it in her breaſt,
Where deep it bluſhed upon her veſt,
To weed the tree of liberty;
And while it blooms as freedom's gueſt,
There let it ever be.

CLARE.

The Heart's ease.

THERE is a little flower that's found
In almoſt every garden-ground,
'Tis lowly, but 'tis ſweet;
And if its name expreſs its power,
Upon this earth a choicer flower
You'll never, never meet.

No, not the wealth of Chili's mine,
Dear flow'ret, may compare with thine—
For thee I'd give it all!
But if the wealthy will not bear
Thy modeſt charms in their parterre,
Grow 'neath my garden wall.

I ſaid, in every garden-ground;
Perhaps in Eden 'twas not found,
For there it was not wanted;
But ſoon as ſin and ſorrow came,
Thy flower received its gladdening name,
By mercy's angel planted.

He took its azure from the ſky—
It is the hue of conſtancy,
And conſtant ſhould our faith be;
With that he mingled ſplendid gold,
To ſhow that, if our faith we hold,
We ſhall be crowned with glory.

MISS BOWLES.

The Harebell.

IN Spring's green lap there blooms a
flower,
Whoſe cup imbibes each vernal
ſhower;
That ſips freſh Nature's balmy dew,
Clad in her ſweeteſt, pureſt blue;
Yet ſhuns the ruddy eye of morning,
The ſhaggy wood's brown ſhades adorning.
Simple flow'ret! child of May!
Though hid from the broad gaze of day,
Doom'd in the ſhade thy ſweets to ſhed,
Still Nature's darling thou'lt remain—
She feeds thee with her ſofteſt rain,
Fills each bud with honey'd tears,
With genial gales thy boſom cheers
Ah, then, unfold thy ſimple charms
In yon deep thicket's circling arms,
Far from the fierce and ſultry glare,
No heedleſs hand ſhall harm thee there;
Still, then, avoid the gaudy ſcene,
The flaunting ſun, th' embroider'd green,
And bloom and fade, with chaſte reſerve, unſeen.

CAROLINE SYMMONS.

The Lily of the Valley.



O the curious eye
A little monitor preſents her page
Of choice inſtruction, with her ſnowy bells,
The lily of the vale. She not affects
The public walk, nor gaze of mid-day ſun;
She to no ſtate or dignity aſpires,
But ſilent and alone puts on her ſuit,
And ſheds a laſting perfume, but for which
We had not known there was a thing ſo ſweet
Hid in the gloomy ſhade. So, when the blaſt
Her ſiſter tribes confound, and to the earth
Stoop their high heads that vainly were expoſed,
She feels it not but flouriſhes anew,
Still ſheltered and ſecure. And as the ſtorm,
That makes the high elm couch, and rends the oak,
The humble lily ſpares,—a thouſand blows
That ſhake the lofty monarch on his throne,
We leſſer folk feel not. Keen are the pains
Advancement often brings. To be ſecure
Be humble; to be happy, be content.

JAQUES DE LILLE.

FAR from the hum and the noiſy toil
Of a city's endleſs ſtrife,
The flowers with gentle pathos ſpeak
Of a holier, happier life.

ELLEN OGIER.

Buttercups and Daisies.

I NEVER ſee a young hand hold
The ſtarry bunch of white and gold,
But ſomething warm and freſh will ſtart
About the region of my heart;
My ſmile expires into a ſigh;
I feel a ſtruggling in my eye,
'Twixt humid drop and ſparkling ray,
Till rolling tears have won their way;
For ſoul and brain will travel back
Through memory's checker'd mazes,
To days when I but trod life's track
For Buttercups and Daiſies.

There ſeems a bright and fairy ſpell
About their very names to dwell;
And though old Time has mark'd my brow
With care and thought, I love them now.
Smile, if you will, but ſome heart-ſtrings
Are cloſeſt link'd to ſimpleſt things;
And theſe wild flowers will hold mine faſt,
Till love, and life, and all be paſt;
And when the only wiſh I have
Is that the one who raiſes
The turf ſod o'er me, plant my grave
With Buttercups and Daiſies.

ELIZA COOKE.

To The Sweet Briar.

OUR ſweet autumnal weſtern-ſcented wind
Robs of its odour none ſo ſweet a flower,
In all the blooming waſte it left behind,
As that ſweet-brier yields it, and the ſhower
Wets not a roſe that buds in beauty's bower
One half ſo lovely; yet it grows along
The poor girl's pathway, by the poor man's door.
Such are the ſimple folks it dwells among,
And humble as the bud, ſo humble be the ſong.

I love it, for it takes its untouch'd ſtand
Not in the vaſe that ſculptors decorate;
Its ſweetneſs all is of my native land;
And e'en its fragrant leaf has not its mate
Among the perfumes which the rich and great
Bring from the odours of the ſpicy Eaſt.
You love your flowers and plants, and will you hate
The little four-leaved roſe that I love beſt,
That freſheſt will awake, and ſweeteſt go to reſt?

BRAINARD.

CRUSH not the flower while yet it blooms,
Nor caſt in ſcorn its ſweets away,
That breathe around ſuch ſweet perfumes,
But with its love ſhall ſoon decay.

PERCIE.

Hope.

The Hawthorn is always connected with this sentiment in the Language of Flowers.

OH! gaily in life's morning bright
Love ſpeeds the roſy hours,
Illumes each ſcene with ſmiling light,
And ſtrews each ſpot with flowers.

Around his ſhrine young Hope and Joy
Their faireſt gifts impart;
Nor doubts can chill, nor fears deſtroy
The ſunſhine of the heart.

Thoſe flowers will droop, the beams muſt wane,
But, when their glories ceaſe,
A ſofter ſpell will ſtill remain
To ſoothe the ſoul to peace.

For then ſhall friendſhip's tranquil rays
A hallow'd charm impart,
And caſt o'er life's declining days
All joyfulneſs of heart.

From the FORGET-ME-NOT.

The Forget Me Not.

THOU ſweet little flower with the bright blue eye,
That peepeſt from the bank ſo modeſtly,
Thou art come from a ſource inviſible,
And thou haſt ſome important words to tell.

Thou art come like the "ſtill, ſmall voice of Him"
Who whiſpers His truth in evening dim;
Who ſhines in the ſtars in azure ſky,
And gems the dark world with piety.

Thou art come as a warning to wandering ſouls,
Who are careleſs of time as it ſwiftly rolls,
And forgetful of God, who upholds their lot,
But who whiſpers thee, Forget-me-not.

Thou art come as a gift from a Friend ſincere,
Whoſe dwelling is fix'd in the heavenly ſphere,
But whoſe Spirit is with us in every ſpot,
And the voice of whoſe works is, Forget-me-not.

Thou art come to repeat an aſſurance of love
From that changeleſs Friend in the manſions above;
To the ſoul that loves Chriſt in ſincerity
His goodneſs declares, I will not forget thee.

GEMS OF SACRED POETRY.

The Passion Flower.

WE roam the ſeas, give new-found iſles
Some king or conqueror's name;
We rear on earth triumphal piles,
And meeds of earthly fame;

We ſoar to heaven; and to outlive
Our life's contracted ſpan,
Unto the glorious ſtars we give
The names of mortal man.

Then may not one poor flow'ret's bloom
The holier memory ſhare
Of Him, who to avert our doom,
Vouchſafed our ſins to bear?

God dwelleth not in temples rear'd
By works of human hands;
Yet ſhrines auguſt, by men revered,
Are found in Chriſtian lands.

And may not e'en a ſimple flower
Proclaim His glorious praiſe,
Whoſe fiat only had the power
Its form from earth to raiſe?

Then freely let thy bloſſom ope
Its beauties, to recall
A ſcene which bids the humble hope
In Him who died for all!

B. Barton.

To the Lilies of the Field.

LO, the lilies of the field,
How their leaves inſtruction yield!
Hark to nature's leſſon given
By the bleſſed birds of heaven!
Every buſh and tufted tree
Warbles ſweet philoſophy.
Mortal, flee from doubt and ſorrow,
God provideth for the morrow!

Say, with richer crimſon glows
The kingly mantle or the roſe?
Say, have kings more wholeſome fare
Than we poor citizens of air?
Barns nor hoarded grain have we,
Yet we carol merrily:
Mortal, flee from doubt and ſorrow,
God provideth for the morrow!

One there lives whoſe guardian eye
Guides our humble deſtiny:
One there lives, who, lord of all,
Keeps our feathers leſt they fall.
Paſs we blithely then the time,
Fearleſs of the ſnare and lime,
Free from doubt and faithleſs ſorrow:
God provideth for the morrow!

BISHOP HERBERT.

The Daisy.

NOT worlds on worlds in phalanx deep,
Need we to prove a God is here;
The Daiſy freſh from winter's ſleep
Tells of His hands in lines as clear.

For who but He that arch'd the ſkies
And pours the day-ſpring's living flood,
Wondrous alike in all He tries,
Could rear the Daiſy's purple bud;

Mould its green cup, its wiry ſtem;
Its fringèd border nicely ſpin,
And cut the gold-emboſſèd gem,
That let in ſilver gleams within?

Then fling it, unreſtrain'd and free,
O'er hill and dale, and deſert ſod,
That man, where'er he walks, may ſee
In every ſtep the ſtamp of God.

J. M. Good.

The Crocus

WELCOME, mild harbinger of ſpring!
To this ſmall nook of earth;
Feeling and fancy fondly cling
Round thoughts which owe their birth
To thee, and to the humble ſpot
Where chance has fix'd thy lowly lot.

To thee—for thy rich, golden bloom,
Like heaven's fair bow on high,
Portends, amid ſurrounding gloom,
That brighter days draw nigh,
When bloſſoms of more varied dyes
Shall ope their tints to warmer ſkies.

Yet not the lily, nor the roſe,
Though fairer far they be,
Can more delightful thoughts diſcloſe,
Than I derive from thee;
The eye their beauty may prefer—
The heart is thy interpreter!

Thine is the flower of hope, whoſe hue
Is bright with coming joy;
The wall-flower's that of faith too true
For ruin to deſtroy;
And where, oh, where, ſhould hope upſpring
But under faith's protecting wing!

B. Barton.

Autumn Flowers.

FLOWERS of the cloſing year!
Ye bloom amid decay,
And come, like friends ſincere,
When wintry ſtorms appear,
And all have paſs'd away,
That clothed gay Spring's luxuriant bowers
With garlands meet for ſunny hours.

The harebell bright and blue,
That loves the dingle wild,
In whoſe cerulean hue
Heaven's own bleſt tint we view,
On days ſerene and mild;
How beauteous, like an azure gem,
She droopeth from her graceful ſtem!

The foxglove's purple bell
On bank and upland plain;
The ſcarlet pimpernel,
And daiſy in the dell,
That kindly blooms again,
When all her ſiſters of the Spring
On earth's cold lap are withering.

The bineweed, pure and pale,
That ſues to all for aid;
And, when rude ſtorms aſſail,
Her ſnowy virgin-veil
Doth, like ſome timid maid,
In conſcious weakneſs moſt ſecure,
Unſcathed its ſterneſt ſhocks endure.

The Honeysuckle.

SEE the Honeyſuckle twine
Round this caſement;—'tis a ſhrine
Where the heart doth incenſe give,
And the pure affections live
In the mother's gentle breaſt,
By her ſmiling infant preſſ'd.

Bleſſed ſhrine! dear, bliſsful home!
Source whence happineſs doth come!
Round by the cheerful hearth do meet
All things beauteous, all things ſweet;
Ev'ry ſolace of man's life,
Mother, daughter, ſiſter, wife.

England, iſle of free and brave,
Circled by the Atlantic wave,
Though we ſeek the faireſt land
That the ſouth wind ever fann'd,
Yet we cannot hope to ſee
Homes ſo holy as in thee.

As the tortoiſe turns his head
Towards its native ocean bed,
Howſoever far it bè
From its own beloved ſea,
Thus, dear Albion, evermore
Do we turn to ſeek thy ſhore.

COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

To the Snowdrop.

LIKE pendant flakes of vegetating ſnow,
The early herald of the infant year,
Ere yet the adventurous crocus dares to blow,
Beneath the orchard boughs thy buds appear.

While ſtill the cold north-eaſt ungenial lours,
And ſcarce the hazel in the leafleſs copſe,
Or ſallows ſhow their downy powdered flowers,
The graſs is spangled with thy ſilver drops.

Yet when thoſe pallid bloſſoms ſhall give place
To countleſs tribes, of richer hue and ſcent,
Summer's gay blooms, and autumn's yellow race,
I ſhall thy pale inodorous bells lament.

So journeying onwards in life's varied track,
Ev'n while warm youth its bright illuſion lends,
Fond memory often with regret looks back
To childhood's pleaſures, and to infant friends.

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

LOVELY flowers are the ſmiles of God's goodneſs.

WILBERFORCE.

The Marigold.

WHEN with a ſerious muſing I behold
The grateful and obſequious Marigold,
How duly every morning ſhe diſplays
Her open breaſt when Titan ſpreads his rays;
How ſhe obſerves him in his daily walk,
Still bending towards him her ſmall, ſlender ſtalk;
How, when he down declines, ſhe droops and mourns,
Bedew'd as 'twere with tears, till he returns;
And how ſhe veils her flowers when he is gone,
As if ſhe ſcornèd to be lookèd on
By an inferior eye; or did contemn
To wait upon a meaner light than him:—
When thus I meditate, methinks the flowers
Have ſpirits far more generous than ours,
And give us fair examples, to deſpiſe
The ſervile fawnings and idolatries
Wherewith we court theſe earthly things below,
Which merit not the ſervice we beſtow.
But, O my God, though grovelling I appear
Upon the ground, yet in my deſire
To that which is above me, I aſpire;
And all my beſt affections I profeſs
To Him that is the Sun of Righteouſneſs.
Oh! keep the morning of His incarnation,
The burning noontide of His bitter paſſion,
The night of His deſcending, and the height
Of His aſcenſion, ever in my ſight;
That imitating Him in what I may,
I never follow an inferior way.

19 GEORGE WITHER.

Field Flowers

YE field flowers! the gardens eclipſe you, 'tis true,
Yet, wildlings of Nature, I doat upon you!
For ye waft me to ſummers of old,
When the earth teem'd around me with fairy delight,
And when daiſies and buttercups gladden'd my ſight,
Like treaſures of ſilver and gold.

I love you for lulling me back into dreams
Of the blue Highland mountains and echoing ſtreams,
And of broken glades breathing their balm;
While the deer was ſeen glancing in ſunſhine remote,
And the deep mellow cruſh of the woodpigeon's note,
Made muſic that ſweeten'd the calm.

Not a paſtoral ſong has a pleaſanter tune
Than you ſpeak to my heart, little wildlings of June,
Of old ruinous caſtles ye tell;
Where I thought it delightful your beauties to find
When the magic of Nature firſt breathed on my mind,
And your bloſſoms were part of her ſpell.

Even now what affections the violet awakes!
What loved little islands, twice ſeen in the lakes,
Can the wild water-lily reſtore!
What landſcapes I read in the primroſe's looks,
And what pictures of pebbled and minnowy brooks,
In the vetches that tangled their ſhore!

CAMPBELL.

The Sunflower.

EAGLE of flowers! I ſee thee ſtand,
And on the ſun's noon glory gaze;
With eye like his thy lids expand,
And fringe their diſk with golden rays;
Though fixed on earth, in darkneſs rooted there,
Light is thine element, thy dwelling air,
Thy proſpect heaven.
So would mine eagle ſoul deſcry,
Beyond the path where planets run,
The ſplendour of Creation's ſun;
Though ſprung from earth, and haſt'ning to the tomb,
In hope a flower of paradiſe to bloom,
I look to heaven.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

FLOWERS, wherefore do ye bloom?
We ſtrew thy pathway to the tomb.

FLOWERS are like the pleaſures of the world.

SHAKESPEARE.

FAR from the hum and the noiſy toil
Of a city's endleſs ſtrife,
The flowers with gentle pathos ſpeak
Of a holier, happier life.

ELLEN OGIER.

Daffodils.

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I ſaw a crowd,
A hoſt of golden daffodils,
Beſide the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the ſtars that ſhine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They ſtretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of the bay:
Ten thouſand ſaw I at a glance
Toſſing their heads in ſprightly dance.

The waves beſide them danced, but they
Outdid the ſparkling waves in glee;
A poet could not but be gay,
In ſuch a jocund company;
I gazed—gazed—but little thought
What wealth the ſhow to me had brought.

For oft, when on my couch I lie,
In vacant or in penſive mood,
They flaſh upon that inward eye
Which is the bliſs of ſolitude,
And then my heart with pleaſure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

WORDSWORTH.

The Moss Rose

THE angel of the flowers one day
Beneath a roſe tree ſleeping lay,
That ſpirit to whoſe charge is given
To bathe young buds in dews from heaven;
Awakening from his light repoſe,
The angel whiſper'd to the Roſe—
"O fondeſt object of my care,
Still faireſt found where all are fair,
For the ſweet ſhade thou gaveſt to me,
Aſk what thou wilt 'tis granted thee."
Then ſaid the Roſe, with deepening glow—
"On me another grace beſtow."
The Spirit pauſed in ſilent thought,
What grace was there that flower had not?
'Twas but a moment—o'er the Roſe
A veil of moſs the angel throws;
And robed in nature's ſimpleſt weed
Could there a flower that Roſe exceed?

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

FLOWERS—the terreſtrial ſtars that bring down heaven to earth, and carry up our thoughts from earth to heaven.

Poppies.

WE are ſlumberous Poppies,
Lords of Lethe downs,
Some awake, and ſome aſleep,
Sleeping in our crowns.
What perchance our dreams may know,
Let our ſerious beauty ſhow.

Central depth of purple,
Leaves more bright than roſe,
Who ſhall tell what brighteſt thought
Out of darkeſt grows?
Who, through what funereal pain
Souls to love and peace attain?

Viſions aye are on us,
Unto eyes of power,
Pluto's always ſetting ſun,
And Proſerpine's bower;
There, like bees, the pale ſouls come
For our drink with drowſy hum.

Taſte, ye mortals, alſo;
Milky-hearted, we;
Taſte, but with a reverent care
Active, patient be,
Too much gladneſs brings to gloom
Thoſe who on the gods preſume.

LEIGH HUNT.

Laurustinus.

FAIR tree of winter! freſh and flowering,
When all around is dead and dry;
Whoſe ruby buds, though ſtorms are low'ring,
Spread their white bloſſoms to the ſky.
Green are thy leaves, more purely green
Through every changing period ſeen;
And when the gaudy months are paſt
Thy lovelieſt ſeaſon is the laſt.
Be thou an emblem thus unfolding
The hiſtory of that maiden's mind,
Whoſe eye, theſe humble lines beholding,
In them her future lot may find;
Through life's mutations may ſhe be
A modeſt evergreen like thee:
Though bleſt in youth, in age more bleſt,
Still be her lateſt days the beſt.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

So take my gift! 'tis a ſimple flower,
But perhaps 'twill wile a weary hour;
And the ſpirit that its light magic weaves
May touch your heart from its ſimple leaves;
And if theſe ſhould fail, it at leaſt will be
A token of love from me to thee.

WILLIS.

The Lily and the Rose.

THE ſnowy Lily preſſ'd with heavy rain,
Which fills her cup with ſhowers up to the brink,
The weary ſtalk no longer can ſuſtain
The head, but low beneath the burden ſink.
Or ſhould the virgin Roſe her leaves diſplay,
And ope her boſom to the blaze of day,
Down drops her double ruff, and all her charms decay.

Languid and dying ſeems the purple flower,
Fainting through heat, low hangs her drooping head;
But if revived by a ſoft falling ſhower
Again her lively beauties ſhe doth ſpread,
And with new pride her ſilken leaves display;
And while the ſun doth now more gently play,
Lays out her ſwelling boſom to the ſmiling day.

GILES FLETCHER.

The Reaper and the Flowers.

THERE is a reaper, whoſe name is Death,
And, with his ſickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have nought that is fair?" ſaith he;
"Have nought but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of theſe flowers is ſweet to me,
I will give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kiſs'd their drooping leaves;
It was for the Lord of Paradiſe
He bound them in his ſheaves.

"My Lord has need of theſe flow'rets gay,"
The reaper ſaid, and ſmiled;
"Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where He was once a child.

"They ſhall all bloom in fields of light,
Tranſplanted by my care;
And ſaints, upon their garments white,
Theſe ſacred bloſſoms wear."

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,
The flowers she most did love;
She knew she should find them all again
In the fields of light above.

Oh, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away.

LONGFELLOW.



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